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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/ERA

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TAGS: PGOV PHUM PREL SP EUN
SUBJECT: SPAIN'S VIEWS ON EVE OF SEPTEMBER GAERC

REF: A. STATE 96598
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 1C. MADRID 956

Classified By: DCM Arnold Chacon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Poloff delivered GAERC demarche (reftel a) to Spanish MFA Assistant Deputy Political Director Maria Luisa Benitez-Donoso on September 12. Benitez-Donoso said that the September GAERC will address Zimbabwe, Somalia, Serbia, Belarus and Georgia. Turkey is not on the current agenda.
END SUMMARY.

//ZIMBABWE//

12. (C) Benitez-Donoso said that the GOS agrees that AU and UN coordination with SADC is key to reaching a political solution for Zimbabwe. She said that the EU will proceed with the implementation of restrictive measures, expanding the list of individuals and enterprises subject to sanctions, but that Spain will only support measures that do not adversely impact the general population.

//SOMALIA//

13. (C) Benitez-Donoso said that Spain will again indicate to the EU that humanitarian aid and coordination with the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) is essential to finding a well-balanced solution. Spain will again pass the message previously sent by the Somali Government (refel b) seeking financial support, and specifically for the money promised by the Commission to pay the Somali soldiers. On the issue of anti-piracy efforts, according to Benitez-Donoso, the EU is currently reviewing options and planning for an ESDP mission in a coordinated fashion. She echoed President Zapatero's September 11 Congressional announcement of the EU's anticipated activation of a coordination cell to protect European ships in the Indian Ocean and Spain's contribution of a Naval Captain to that effort.

//SERBIA//

14. (C) According to Benitez-Donoso, like the United States, Spain fully supports Serbia's Euro-Atlantic integration and views the Karadzic extradition as a positive step forward. Benitez-Donoso said that Spain would rather send a message of support to the new Serbian government, rather than pointing out deficiencies. She expects there to be discussion on Serbia's ICJ advisory opinion request on the legality of Kosovo's declaration of independence. Benitez-Donoso said that Spain has not established an official position on the issue and is holding out for development of an EU common position. In a September 3 conversation with Spanish Subdirector General for Central and Southern Europe Ramon Abaroa Carranza, however, Abaroa indicated to poloff that the Government of Spain does not support Serbia's action and will

abstain should the issue come to a vote in the General Assembly.

//BELARUS//

15. (C) Benitez-Donoso confirmed that Belarus is on the agenda and that the approved conclusions would be adopted without discussion. She said that Belarus will also be congratulated for the recent liberation of political prisoners.

//GEORGIA//

16. (C) Benitez-Donoso said that Spain fully supports the EU Presidency's efforts and believes that the outcome of the September 8 negotiations was "good." She said that Spain will contribute to the EU observership mission, but that the number of personnel to be sent is still under discussion within the GOS. According to Benitez-Donoso, Spain will also participate in the OSCE mission and donor's conference as the GOS considers Spain's presence in the region important, further evidenced by FM Moratinos announcement on September 8 that a permanent Ambassador will be sent to the Caucasus region and posted in Tbilisi. Benitez-Donoso said that FM Moratinos made clear that the GOS wants focused conclusions with respect to Georgia and that "now is not the appropriate time to place blame or consider sanctions." She also said that Spain does not currently have a Spanish nominee for the EU Special Representative position.

Aguirre